THE

Proud Squire Reform'd.

BEING

A great Example both to RICH and POOR;

In an Account of one 'Squire HOWARD, living near the Town of CHARD, in Somerſetſhire.

Of his being in his Grove, and ſeeing at a Diſtance a labouring Man by the ſide of a Brook, eating Bread and drinking Water, to ſatisfy his Hunger and Thirſt; and then returned Thanks to God for it.

LIKEWISE,

An Account of the poor Man's Death, and the ſtrange Manner of the Squire's Reformation who on returning homewards, heard a great Noiſe, and an Angel appearing, told him, The richeſt Man in the Pariſh ſhould die that Night; and of the Leaves dropping off the Trees, and the Graſs withering away.

Several ſufficient Perſons in the ſaid Pariſh can Teſtify the Truth hereof.

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BRITISH MUSEUM

THE

Proud Squire Reformed.

OF all the poems we have heard of late,
To mind us of our change and future ſtate.
The ſubject which I now am to unfold,
Is worthy to be pen'd in lines of gold.

It is concerning one 'ſquire Howard,
A man of great poſſeſſions, very proud;
Pride and ambition ſo in him did reign,
All that were poor he held in great diſdain.

If any one of mean degree paſs'd by,
Upon him he would caſt a ſcornful eye,
And with diſdainful frowns ſharp ſpeeches had.
Which made the poor to tremble and look ſad.

Great lofty thoughts within his braaſt did ſwell,
Thinking himſelf a man who did excel
All other men for riches in the town,
Where many liv'd beſides of great renown.

Near to his houſe he had a pleaſant grove,
Where every day he took his walks, and lov'd
To view the ſtately trees that grew therein,
And hear the chearful birds moſt ſweetly ſing.

One day as he was walking in that place,
An object did appear before hi face,
A labouring man with a brown cruſt of bread,
Came to a brook, where heartily he fed.

Then after this he drank of the clear brook,
Then off his hat this labouring man he took;
Returning thanks unto the Lord of heaven,
Who had to him his bread and water given.

This having done, like one fill'd with content,
Unto his work this labouring man he went;
Leaving this proud man in his grove to ſtay,
Who on a ſudden heard a voice to ſay,

" The greateſt ſoul that lives upon the earth
" When God ſees fit he muſt reſign his breath

" The greateſt man that to this town belong,
" Muſt die this night, tho' now in health & ſtrong.
Hearing theſe words, this lofty man he took
This on himſelf, and with a mournful look,
With trembling joints like one that was half dead
Returned home, and went unto his bed.
Telling his wife and children of this thing,
Who at this news in tears their hands did wring,
They watch'd with him all night, and when 't was day,
Alive in health before them there he lay.

Being roſe up, the great bell of the town
Began to ring, and hearing of the ſound,
He ſaid, Who's dead, Make haſte, go aſk and ſee,
That I may know who richer is than me.

At his command a ſervant out did go,
Who ſoon return'd, and forthwith let him know

That one John Smith, a labouring man was dead,
Who in his ſight on bread and water fed.

If he is gone the maſter then reply'd,
And was the richeſt man, I'm ſatisfy'd,
That with a wounded ſpirit ſay I can.
That I muſt ſurely be the proudeſt man.

Ah! curſed pomp, and gaudy rich atire,
And heaps of gold, which I ſo much admire;
Minding theſe, my ſoul I did forget,
Like one that ſlighted Grace, and wanted wit.

'Tis hard to think I live thus like a fool.
To baniſh reaſon, and let folly rule
Thus over me; to prize earth's fading ſtore,
Tho' great poſſeſſions, yet a man that's poor,

Thoſe creatures that do daily beg their bread,
They are not fill'd like me with fear and dread ;
They with content are in a rich conditton,
While I with groans am poor thro' great ambition.

In pride's vain chamber I'll no longer lurk,
'Tis time for me now to begin to work,
For while my ſoul is poor, I muſt be doing,
If poſſible to prevent my ruin.

The only work upon the earth for me,
To help my ſoul, it muſt be Charity.

A very wholeſome ſalve to help my heart,
Which thro' my ſins with bleeding wounds do
do ſmart.

Ah! happy voice! which by the ſmiles of fate.
Gave me this CALL before it was too late ;
For I was running headlong in the lake,
Where damned ſouls ſad hedious cries do make.

I from this time in mourning will appear,
Leaving myſelf but fifty pounds a year
To live upon, the reſt I'll daily give
Unto this pariſh poor whilſt I do live,

Now this proud mortal, who had much in ſtore,
And was a man who did deſpiſe the poor,
He is reform'd and of his ſoul takes care,
Feeding and cloathing of the poor and bare.

Now to conclude, Lord give us grace, that we
May ſtill be mindful of eternity,
Making proviſion for a future ſtate,
Leſt we repent in tears when 'tis too late.

FINIS.

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